

Dwight D. Godwin
Seymour, CT 06483
dwight.godwin@gmail.com
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RE: H.B. No. 6765 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING INTERPRETER QUALIFICATIONS.

Chairpersons Senator Moore and Representative Abercrombie, Vice-chairs Senator Slossberg and Representative McGee and members of the Human Services Committee,

I wish to submit my support of HB number 6765 regarding Interpreter Qualifications with two concerns.

In Commissioner Amy Porter's report to the legislature, dated December 2014, she outlined that in "Phase 2":

"Hold registration from the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and, for an interpreter who works in Pre-K-12 settings, have a minimum score of 3.5 on the EIPA."

This should read, Hold registration from the National Registry of interpreters for the Deaf OR, for an interpreter who works in Pre-K – 12 settings; have a minimum score of 3.5 on the EIPA.

As an interpreter for the Deaf myself, the law should not exclude those of us who hold National Certification from working in the Pre-K through 12 environments. The EIPA is a valid certification for Pre-K through 12 interpreting, but it is not currently offered in the state of CT. and the RID National Certification is a generalist exam that qualifies us to work in many areas. National Certification also provides that we are professional and are able to self-monitor areas which we are and are not qualified to work in. Please change the language in the bill to reflect that Pre-k through 12 work may be performed by an interpreter holding National Certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf OR the EIPA 3.5 or above.

My second area of concern regarding this bill pertains to Commissioner Porter's statements in her report to the legislature regarding, "Methods to monitor compliance with interpreter qualification standards."

In this section Commissioner Porter states,

"The current mechanism to monitor compliance with interpreter qualification standards is through the existing certifying bodies (National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, National Association of the Deaf and National Training, Evaluation and Certification Unit) and through the registration process which requires documentation of interpreter qualifications."

There is a misunderstanding on Commissioner Porter's part in that statement. Neither the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, nor the National Association of the Deaf and National Training, Evaluation and Certification Unit monitor any local, state nor federal laws related to interpreter certification. They monitor the qualifications necessary to take their examinations, but do not involve themselves in the individual laws established in individual areas.

Our current statutes governing interpreting for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the state have no consequences for violation. They are equivalent to saying that one cannot run a red light, but if you do, we are not going to do anything to you for it. Only those who take our laws seriously follow them and quite a few interpreters work without adhering to the current statutes because there is no concern of consequences.

Passage of the new standards without the plan to implement a monitoring body here in the state of Connecticut would serve little to no purpose at all.

I ask that you pass legislation that is enforceable and has consequences attached for violation. Only a monitoring board that is not connected to Commissioner Porter's agency, DoRS, can accomplish this task.

Submitted respectfully,

